

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and continued prosecution of this application in view of the following remarks.

1. Status of the Claims

Claims 1-20 are pending in this application. Claims 1, 6, 13, 17, 18, 19 and 20 were amended to further clarify the invention. No new issues are raised as the amendments clarify that the claimed device has a hinge on only one side of the brace or a single hinge side of the brace as previously claimed. Contrary to the Examiner's statement in the previous Office Action, "single hinge side" means there is a hinge on only one side of the device, particularly in the context of the present application. Support for the amendments can be found in the specification as originally filed, for example in Figures 1-2.

2. 35 U.S.C. §102 Rejections

Claims 1-5 and 17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,817,588 to Bledsoe (Bledsoe). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection. Bledsoe discloses a knee brace having a hinge mechanism on both sides of the knee brace. It does not disclose a knee brace having a hinge mechanism on only one side of the brace.

3. 35 U.S.C. §103 Rejections

a. Bledsoe, In View Of Davis, Does Not Teach Or Suggest A Knee Brace Of The Present Invention

Claims 6-10 and 18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Bledsoe in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,421,810 to Davis et al. (Davis). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Davis teaches a hip brace comprising a pivot joint having intermeshing teeth. However, neither Davis nor Bledsoe teaches or suggests a knee brace having a hinge mechanism on only one side or on a single hinge side of the brace. Davis only teaches a hip brace and does not teach a knee brace. Bledsoe does not teach a knee brace having a hinge mechanism on only one side of the brace. The knee

brace of Bledsoe has two hinges on opposite sides of the brace. This differs greatly from the present invention which has a hinge mechanism on only one side, specifically so that the hinge mechanism can be proximate only the knee compartment to be unloaded.

**b. Bledsoe, In View Of Airy, Does Not Teach Or Suggest A
Knee Brace Of The Present Invention**

Claims 11-14 and 19-20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Bledsoe in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,052,379 to Airy et al. (Airy). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Airy teaches a knee brace comprising an adjustable cuff. However, neither Airy nor Bledsoe teaches or suggests a knee brace having a hinge mechanism on only one side, or on a single hinge side, of the brace. Both Airy and Bledsoe only teach a knee brace having two hinges on opposite sides of the brace. This differs greatly from the present invention which has a hinge mechanism on only one side.

**c. Bledsoe, In View Of Castillo, Does Not Teach Or Suggest A
Knee Brace Of The Present Invention**

Claims 15-16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Bledsoe in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,135,469 to Castillo (Castillo). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Castillo discloses a knee brace comprising a foam rubber skin adhesion layer including a silicone material. However, neither Castillo nor Bledsoe teaches or suggests a knee brace having a hinge mechanism on only one side. Both Castillo and Bledsoe only disclose a knee brace having two hinges on opposite sides of the knee brace. This differs greatly from the present invention which has a hinge mechanism on only one side.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, claims 1-20 are in condition for allowance. An early indication of allowance is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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